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Official Records

29th plenary meeting
Monday, 10 October 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Floods and mudslides in Central America and earthquake in South Asia

The President: I begin this morning by expressing our solidarity with the people of Pakistan and of its neighbours India and Afghanistan who have been tragically affected by a devastating earthquake this weekend. We have all been shocked by the news reports we have seen, with whole villages disappearing and massive numbers of people, including a tragic number of children, falling victim to this disaster.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I offer our deepest sympathy to the Governments and the peoples of the three countries and to the families and friends of those killed, injured or missing. All of us in the General Assembly stand shoulder to shoulder with them now as rescue and relief work continues. The world must also ensure that they receive the support and cooperation they need for the longer-term recovery and reconstruction that will be necessary.

The earthquake, along with the flooding and mudslides in Guatemala and its neighbours in Central America, namely, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua — which have also resulted in the tragic loss of many lives under horrible circumstances — remind us both of the power of nature and of the importance of a quick and coordinated international response at times such as this.

I now call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. A. A. Chaudhry (Pakistan): The earthquake that hit Pakistan on 8 October has caused tremendous loss of life and damage to infrastructure. The extent of the damage is still unfolding as rescue teams reach out to remote and inaccessible mountainous areas.

On behalf of the Government of Pakistan, I thank you, Mr. President, and all the Governments represented here for your kind words of sympathy and generous offers of assistance in this hour of national tragedy. Many Governments, international and non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies and bodies have offered to help. The Government of Pakistan appreciates and welcomes the international assistance.

The President: I now call on the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner-Klée (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, and, through you, to all the delegations represented here, for the expression of solidarity extended to us at this time of sadness for my country.

The devastating effects of these natural disasters are directly related to the manner in which humankind interacts with nature. We cannot forget that link. But we also cannot forget our link with this House, which offered us prompt cooperation. We would like to thank the Assembly and all the United Nations organizations that are providing us their steadfast and selfless assistance.

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We are also grateful for the solidarity and assistance of our brothers and sisters in the region and beyond. I should like personally to express my gratitude for those efforts. We appreciate them enormously.

The President: I wish again to express our condolences to the Governments and the peoples of the countries suffering as a result of these terrible natural disasters and their effects.

Agenda item 111

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(a) Election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 2005.

The five outgoing non-permanent members are the following: Algeria, Benin, Brazil, the Philippines and Romania. Those five States cannot be re-elected. Their names, therefore, should not appear on the ballot papers.

Apart from the five permanent members, the Security Council will include in the year 2006 the following States: Argentina, Denmark, Greece, Japan and the United Republic of Tanzania. The names of those States, therefore, should also not appear on the ballot papers.

Of the five non-permanent members that will remain in office in the year 2006, two are from Africa and Asia, one is from Latin America and the Caribbean and two are from Western Europe and other States.

Consequently, pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 1991 A (XVIII), of 17 December 1963, the five non-permanent members should be elected according to the following pattern: three from Africa and Asia, one from Eastern Europe and one from Latin America and the Caribbean. The ballot papers reflect that pattern.

In accordance with established practice, there is an understanding to the effect that, of the three States to be elected from Africa and Asia, two should be from Africa and one from Asia.

I should like to inform the Assembly that those candidates, their number not exceeding the number of seats to be filled, receiving the greatest number of votes and a two-thirds majority of those present and voting will be declared elected. In the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

The President: In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

Regarding candidatures, I have been informed by the Chairpersons of the respective regional groups of the following. For the three vacant seats from among the African and Asian States, there are three endorsed candidates, namely, the Congo, Ghana and Qatar. For the one vacant seat from among the Eastern European States, Slovakia is the endorsed candidate. For the one vacant seat from among the Latin American and Caribbean States, there are two candidates, namely, Nicaragua and Peru.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, we shall now proceed to the election by secret ballot.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

I would also like to seek the usual cooperation of representatives during the time of the conduct of the election. Please be reminded that during the voting process all campaigning should cease in the General Assembly Hall. That means in particular that, once the election has begun, no more campaign material may be distributed inside the Hall. All representatives are also requested to remain at their seats so that the voting process can proceed in an orderly manner. I thank members for their cooperation.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A", "B" and "C" will now be distributed. I request representatives to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed.

May I ask representatives to write on the ballot papers marked "A", for the African and Asian States, the names of the three States for which they wish to vote; on the ballot papers marked "B", for the Eastern European States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote; and on the ballot papers marked "C", for the Latin American and Caribbean States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote.

A ballot paper containing more names from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it will be declared invalid. Names of Member States on a ballot paper that do not belong to that region will not be counted.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Hoy (Cambodia), Mr. Mesquita (Portugal), Ms. Oancea (Romania), Mr. Mwandambwa (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Loedel (Uruguay) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 10.45 a.m. and resumed at 11.40 a.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — African and Asian States

Number of ballot papers:	191
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	191
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	189
Required majority of members present and voting:	126
Number of votes obtained:	
Congo	188
Qatar	186
Ghana	184
Indonesia	1

Group B — Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	191
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	191
Abstentions:	6
Number of members voting:	185
Required majority of members present and voting:	124
Number of votes obtained:	
Slovakia	185

Group C — Latin American and Caribbean States

Number of ballot papers:	191
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	191
Abstentions:	4
Number of members voting:	187
Required majority of members present and voting:	125
Votes obtained:	
Peru	144
Nicaragua	43

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority and the largest number of votes, the following States were elected members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning 1 January 2006: Congo, Ghana, Peru, Qatar and Slovakia.

The President: I congratulate the States that have been elected members of the Security Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in the election.

We have thus concluded our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 111.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.